

Ki Tisa Wrap-Up

by Sammy Schaechter

Hashem tells Moshe to take a count of the Jewish adult male population by collecting half a silver shekel from each individual. The collected silver was melted down, and was made into sockets for the beams of the Mishkan. Hashem told Moshe to make a copper washstand for the Mishkan. The Kohanim would use this faucet to wash their hands and feet before their service. Hashem tells Moshe the recipe for making holy "anointing oil." This oil, which was prepared with various scented herbs and fine spices, was used to anoint and sanctify the Mishkan, its vessels, and Aharon and his sons. The remainder of the oil was put aside, and was used to anoint kings and Kohen Gadols of future generations. Hashem also gave Moshe the formula for the incense which was offered twice-daily in the Mishkan. The duplication of the anointing oil or incense for personal use is prohibited. Hashem gave Betzalel wisdom, and appointed him to be the chief craftsman of the Mishkan and its contents. Hashem assigned Oholiav as

TORAH COMICS

The Jews make a golden calf and bow down to it.



Excerpt from ANDiDREW Torah Comics. Get the book or draw your own at TorahComics.com

came down with the luchot, saw the idolatrous partying, and broke the luchot. Moshe recruits the Shevet of Levi to punish the main people who started it all. Three thousand idol worshippers were executed on that day. Moshe went back up to Har Sinai in an attempt to gain complete atonement for the sin. Hashem told Moshe to lead the Jews towards the Promised Land, but insisted that He wouldn't be leading them personally; instead an angel will be sent to lead them. Seeing Hashem's displeasure with the Jews, Moshe took his own tent and pitched it outside the camp of Bnei Yisrael. This tent became the center of study and spirituality until

the Mishkan was established. Moshe asked Hashem to reconsider having an angel lead them. Hashem agreed to lead them Himself again. Moshe then requested that Hashem's presence never rest itself on any other nation other than the Jews and Hashem agreed. Hashem told Moshe to carve new luchot that Hashem would engrave the Aseret HaDibrot on. Hashem sealed a covenant with Moshe, assuring him again that His presence will only dwell with the Jews. Hashem told the Jewish people not to make idols, to observe the Shalosh Regalim, not to eat chametz on Pesach, to sanctify male firstborn humans and cattle, and not to cook meat together with milk. Moshe came down from Har Sinai with the second set of luchot, and beams of light were coming from his face. Aharon and the people were originally afraid of him. Moshe taught the people the Torah he studied on the mountain.

his assistant. Hashem then told the Jewish people to observe Shabbat, the eternal sign between Him and Bnei Yisrael. After Hashem revealed Himself to the entire nation at Har Sinai and told them the Aseret HaDibrot, Moshe went up the mountain where he stayed for forty days. While there, he studied the Torah and received the luchot. The Jews miscalculated when Moshe was supposed to return, and when he didn't appear on the day when they anticipated him, they became impatient and demand of Aharon to make them a new god. Aharon cooperates, all along intending to postpone and buy time until Moshe's return, but despite his efforts, a Golden Calf emerged from the flames. The festivities and sacrifices started early the next morning. Moshe pleaded with an infuriated G-d to forgive the Jews' sin. Hashem agreed and sympathized from His plan to destroy the Jews. Moshe

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The Peasant's Donation

To work in gold (31:4)

The people revered R' Chaim of Volozhin not only for his Torah scholarship, but for his insight. He would often be called upon to smooth the differences between the two parties of a quarrel.

The following story illustrates this cleverness and insight:

When R' Chaim founded the Yeshivah of Volozhin he delegated a man to raise money for its maintenance. Among the contributors was a villager, who gave generously and with a willing heart.

With time the sum of monies which had been collected dwindled and the collector was forced to travel and gather more funds. Before he set out on his trip, he requested a new set of fine clothes, so as to make a good impression upon his prospective contributors. A suit was ordered. When it was ready, the meshulach also requested a horse and carriage. This, he said, would save him much time and would also make a fine impression on people.

This, too, was granted. The meshulach left Volozhin looking like a new man, like a prosperous person himself. In time, he paid a visit to the villager who had previously given generously. To his great surprise, the man refused to give him a penny this time. The meshulach tried all kinds of arguments but nothing helped. The man kept his purse strings tightly shut and was very cold towards him.

Terribly disappointed, the collector returned to R' Chaim and told him

what had happened. R' Chaim listened and decided to pay the villager a visit.

The man received the rosh yeshivah with the honor and respect that was his due. After the usual pleasantries, R' Chaim finally came to the point of his visit. "Why have you stopped supporting the Volozhiner Yeshivah?" he asked.

The villager explained: "I will tell you the truth, Rebbe. Up to now, I naively thought that the money I gave went directly towards supporting the yeshivah itself and its needy students. For that I gave willingly, for I greatly respect Torah study and certainly wish to have a portion in it. But when your fundraiser came this time, all decked out in a fancy tailored suit and a splendid carriage, I thought that the money I gave would be going towards support of these unnecessary trappings. I do not want my money wasted on such frills."

R' Chaim replied, "You have a point, my friend. But I would like you to see things in their true light. Surely you are familiar with the verse that says of Bezalel, who supervised the work of the Mishkan, 'And I filled him with the spirit of Hashem, with knowledge, intelligence and wisdom to know... to do creative work... in gold and silver and copper.' One would assume that all the contributors for the Mishkan gave their contributions for the Holy of Holies. But, in fact, the gifts were used for other purposes as well. It was Bezalel's special genius to intuitively know the inner thoughts and intentions of each donor and to measure his sincerity. He was able to know whether a donor

gave his offer purely for the sake of Heaven, without secondary thoughts of honor and prestige, and to use the gifts accordingly. "When a person gave his offering with pure intention, to enhance the House of Hashem, then Bezalel used the gold and silver for the Holy of Holies. If, however, a person had additional thoughts, and thought the gifts would make him important in the eyes of others, then they were used for other parts of the Mishkan.

"The same applies here," R' Chaim explained. The money that you give is intended to support Torah directly. Your intentions and thoughts are pure, leshem shamayim, for Heaven's sake alone. Rest assured that it goes for that purpose alone. There are others who give to the yeshivah both for the sake of Torah and for their good name, for their reputation. Their money goes to keep up appearances too, for the magnificent coach and finely tailored clothing of our meshulach, which is also important in its own right. Those who only give to keep up their own good name — their money goes for the horse's fodder and the repair and upkeep of the coach."

The villager was all smiles. "Oh! Rebbe! How glad I am that you explained this to me. To tell the truth, it hurt me very much to have to refuse the collector for I truly believe in the yeshivah and greatly want a share in its great work. Now that you assure me that my money will go for that alone, I feel so much better."

And he gave R' Chaim his donation with renewed joy.

The Loss and the Gain

To make Shabbos for all their generations (31:16)

R' Yisrael Isser was one of Cracow's most prominent Jews. He owned

a flourishing dry goods shop which stocked the best linens, softest velvets, most shimmering silks and the finest wools. Customers flocked to him, not

only for his superior goods but because he was scrupulously honest. Fine goods and fine character were the secrets of his success.

PARSHA STORIES

Reb Yisrael Isser had an iron rule. He would shut his shop on Friday at noon. Exactly when the town clock struck twelve, he would kindly ask his customers to leave. He would lock up and head straight for home to prepare for Shabbos.

One Friday morning a distinguished cloth merchant came to Reb Yisrael Isser's shop with a long list of merchandise which he needed. The shopkeeper began taking bolt after bolt down from the shelves, unrolling them out on the counter for display. Soon the surface was piled with goods. Some were rejected, but many were to be cut to the customer's specifications.

The clock struck twelve noon. Reb Yisrael turned to his customer and spoke kindly, but firmly, "I am afraid that it is closing time. We will have to continue another time."

"What do you mean, 'closing time'? It is only twelve o'clock. Who in their right

mind closes his shop so early? And when you have such a good customer as myself. Why, just look around, I have selected a good portion of your shop here. It would be ridiculous for you to chase me away now. Besides, I cannot possibly come back next week. I have a large order from a tailor who sews for the nobility. If | disappoint him, he will go to another dealer."

Reb Yisrael Isser shrugged his shoulders and began jingling his keys. He edged towards the door. "That is my rule. I do not break it for anyone."

"And what if I take my business elsewhere?"

"That is your own business. It would be a great loss to me, I cannot deny that. But I have no choice. I will not keep my shop open after noon on Fridays, no matter how great the loss. And now will you please step this way..."

He had his hand on the customer's

arm and was showing him out. Reb Yisrael Isser did not even bother to replace the merchandise and tidy up the shelves. He left, together with the customer, and went home.

His loss was a considerable one. He would have made a great profit from that sale. He had also lost a customer, one of his best. And yet, the Shabbos had been dearer to him than any sum of money. Reb Yisrael Isser's sacrifice made a great impression in Heaven. The heavenly court decided to reward him with a gift far more precious than money. Reb Yisrael Isser was given a son, a very special one. When little Moshe grew up he became one of the greatest poskim, halachic authorities, which our people have known. And the name by which he was known and always referred to, incorporated that of his father: he was the famous Ramo — R' Moshe Isserlish (Isser's son).

Truly a gain well worth the loss!

TALES OF TZADIKIM

Where is the Soul?

For man cannot see Me and live (33:20)

Tell me, Rabban Gamliel," a gentile once asked, "where is your G-d found? Where is He?"

"I do not know," Rabban Gamliel replied.

"But," said the gentile mockingly, "you Jews pray to Him morning and evening, day in day out. Don't you even know where He is?"

"What is so unusual?" said Rabban Gamliel. "You possess something that is with you day and night, yet, you do not know exactly where it is located."

"That is impossible!" he retorted, with certainty.

"Yes, indeed. It is your soul. It is al-

ways with you. Tell me, if you can, where is your soul located?"

"I don't know," the gentile admitted in confusion.

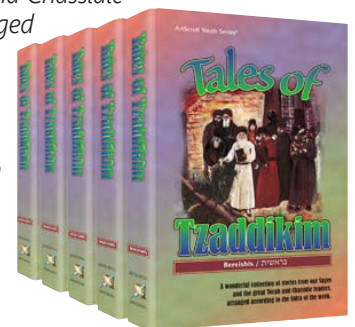
Rabban Gamliel then said tellingly, "If you cannot tell me where to find something that is present with you all the time, how can you expect me to tell you where Hashem is?"

The gentile had been bested this time but nevertheless tried to tease Rabban Gamliel upon another occasion

"Does it not make much more sense," he said, "to worship some object that you can see, as we do, rather than to pray to something invisible?"

Rabban Gamliel replied, "You worship something that you can see, but that cannot see you. With us the reverse is true. We worship Hashem; He created us and can see us. We, His creations, however, cannot see Him, as it says, For man cannot see Me and live."

Tales of Tzadikim by G. Matov is a wonderful collection of stories from our Sages and the great Torah and Chassidic leaders, arranged according to the Sidra. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or online at artscroll.com.



PARSHA PUZZLERS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

by Sammy Schaechter
and Dovid Saleman
Answers on page 7.

EASY Qs

1. Why does the Torah talk about Shabbat right next to the building of the Mishkan?
2. Why did the Bnei Yisroel think that the forty days were up if Moshe didn't come down yet?
3. What sin did the Bnei Yisroel do when they thought משה should have been down from shamaim?
4. Why did Aharon build the altar for the golden calf by himself?
5. What did Moshe do when he saw the golden calf?
6. Did the women join in the sin of the golden calf?
7. Which tribe had nothing to do with the golden calf?
8. How did Hashem show that He forgave the Jewish people?
9. Why did Moshe go up to heaven for another forty days?

MEDIUM Qs

10. What did Moshe do before he went down to the Bnei Yisroel?
11. When was the last time he came down?

LEADER TIP:

Have the kids answer the questions one at a time and see if any of the kids follow the previous wrong answers just like Bnei Yisrael and the Golden Calf.

12. What did he have in his hands?
13. What did Moshe's face look like when he came down with the second Luchot?

HARD Qs

14. What reward were women given for not participating in the golden calf?
15. How has the sin of the golden calf affected the Jewish people through our history?
16. Who was put in charge of building the Mishkan?
17. When was the half shekel collected?
18. How did Moshe count the Bnei Yisroel?
19. What was the Kiyor used for?
20. Who helped Betzalel in building the Mishkan?

DISCUSSION Qs

21. What is the symbolism of everyone given a half shekel and not a whole?
22. Why are only 4 the spices listed by name in the Torah and not all 11?
23. Why is the symbolism of these two people being chosen to construct the Mishkan and the tribes that they are from?
24. Why is Shabbos discussed at the end of the Mishkan discussion?
25. The Pasuk says, "...the people gathered around Aharon and said to him, 'Rise up, make for us gods that will go before us, for this man Moshe who brought us up from Egypt-we don't know what became of him'.

CRACK THE PARSHA CODE

by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.

1. When M C BY, he C a H a S from each P
2. The K was made from C, and the K W their H and F from it
3. The K was a M of S that was B on the M every day
4. The B of the M stopped on S
5. When BY S that M did not C D from H S, the made the E H (G C)
6. The M T their J into a F, to make the E
7. When M came D the M, and S the E H, he T the L down and B them
8. M G the E H into D, and gave the people from it to D
9. M C out "MI L A", and S L joined him
10. M was C to C 2 S just like the 1st L

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Who are the people attempting to replace by creating the Eigel? Hashem? Moshe? Or Both?

26. Why does Hashem call the People "your (Moshe's) people", aren't they Hashem people too?
27. Did Moshe drop the Luchos on purpose or by accident?
28. Why are we told about the Chagim (Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkos) here? Why are we told about redemption of the firstborn again?
29. What is the Isur of eating meat and milk doing here?

PARSHA PUZZLERS

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

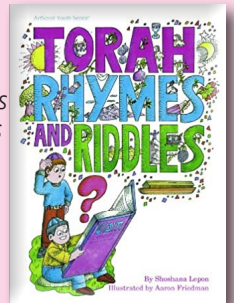
Answers on page 7.

1. The people became worried;
They wondered what was wrong.
Moshe on Mt. Sinai
Was staying much too long.
They crowded all around me
And asked me in great fear:
"Moshe is not coming down!
Who will lead us here?"
I tried to calm the people,
But I was almost alone.
Can you remember who I am?
My name is _____
2. Aharon took the people's rings
And threw them in the fire.
As they melted, I was formed.
The flames grew ever higher.
The people saw me rising up

- And came to dance and laugh.
Then I stepped from the leaping
flames, A giant golden _____
3. Moshe studied forty days
Not sleeping and not eating.
Now he'd teach the Israelites
The Torah at this meeting
He carried both of us with care
Cradled in his arm,
And slowly down the mountainside
He guarded us from harm.
But when he saw the Golden Calf
With dancers all around,
He threw us from his shaking hands
And smashed us to the ground!
The _____
 4. Moshe cried out "Who's for G-d?
For battle come join me!"

- We're the ones who
gathered round,
The brave tribe of _____
5. The first were shattered into bits,
And now they are no more.
Hashem gave us — a brand new
set Just like the two before.
The _____

Torah Rhymes and Riddles by Shoshana Lepon (Author) and Aaron Friedman (Illustrator) is filled with rhyming riddles that test young children's comprehension of the weekly Parsha. For more great children's Torah books, visit artscroll.com



PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

Crime and Punishment

"Just observe My Sabbaths" (Shemos 31:13)

Witnesses reported to R' Yaakov Yosef of Ostrow that the non-Jewish servant of a certain rich man had harnessed the rich man's horses and carted a wagonload of garbage through the streets of the town on the holy Shabbos. The Rebbe went to see the rich man, and asked him for various objects. These objects would be the guarantee that the man would not continue to desecrate the Shabbos.

"What do you need these things for?" the man asked.

"I will have them loaded onto your wagon, which will be led through the

streets with the shamash calling out before it, 'Here is the guarantee that was taken from the wealthy So-and-So, who desecrated the Shabbos, so that he will never repeat this offense.'

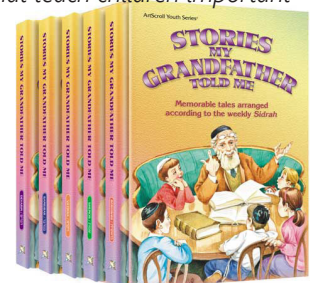
The rich man pleaded to be spared this humiliation, and agreed to pay any fine that the Rebbe might impose. But R' Yaakov Yosef refused to listen, saying, "I will not agree. Shall the poor man be publicly shamed for desecrating the Shabbos, while the rich man is let off with a secret fine? What will the people say to that?"

And the Rebbe did not leave the house until he had seen all the man's gold and silver possessions loaded

onto the wagon. Then the shamash walked before the wagon calling, "Here are the guarantees that were taken from So-and-So, in order that his servants will not continue to desecrate the Shabbos."

Stories My Grandfather Told Me by Zev Greenwald (Author) Libby Lazewnik (Translator) and Tova Katz (illustrator) is packed with short pleasant stories that teach children important

life lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.



PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

R' Ezra's Dilemma

I have filled him with a G-dly spirit, with wisdom, with understanding, and with knowledge" (Shemos 31:3)

In the year 5666 (1906), R' Yitzchak Attia departed this world, leaving behind a wife and a young son, Ezra. Ezra later grew up to become the rosh yeshiva of Porat Yosef Yeshiva. Ezra's older brother and sister were already married, and the burden of caring for their mother fell on young Ezra's shoulders. Hard times came and hunger began to leave its mark on their home.

R' Ezra was not concerned about himself. He accepted the suffering with love. But when erev Shabbos came with not even a penny in the house with which to prepare for Shabbos, the son was not able to bear his mother's pain.

He strained his mind for a solution of how to find a few cents for the most pressing Shabbos necessities.

He walked around their meagerly furnished home, touching various objects and considering whether to put them up for sale. But even the things that they needed for their bare survival were not good enough to sell. They were too old and worn.

"Why don't you go to the beis mid-

rash to learn?" his mother asked.

"How can I go, when I have nothing to give you?" he countered.

"Don't worry, my son," she answered bravely. "Your job is to learn Torah. Hakadosh Baruch Hu will help!"

R' Ezra returned home when it was almost Shabbos. The study of Torah had calmed and refreshed him during the day and made him forget his difficulties. But what would happen on Shabbos?

Then, his face wreathed in joy and faith, he decided, "What will be will be." He would not, Heaven forbid, tarnish the holiness of Shabbos with feelings of pain and distress.

When he walked into the house, his mother greeted him radiantly. A surprise awaited her precious son: The Shabbos necessities were there, and a wonderful smell of delicious food wafted through the air.

R' Ezra stood speechless. He raised questioning eyes to his mother. She was jubilant to have merited preparing for Shabbos properly and told him, "I found an old gold earring in the house. It had rolled away, and been forgotten from the time I was a kallah. I sold it in honor

of the Shabbos Queen!"

Days passed. The mother continued to work hard to support herself and her son, but despite long hours of hard labor she did not manage to eke out a livelihood. The rent ate up the lion's share of her meager earnings, and even bread and water were beyond their meager means. Devoid of options, R' Ezra decided to find a job to prevent them from starving.

At that time, R' Ezra Harari-Raful opened a yeshiva for students from Aram Tzova, headed by the rosh yeshiva, Raphael Shlomo Laniado. When R' Ezra Harari-Raful heard that R' Ezra Attia was learning carpentry, he was shocked.

"Will the world lose one of its lights? Can the Jewish nation afford to lose, Heaven forbid, one of its future teachers?" he exclaimed.

Without hesitation, he went to R' Ezra and told him, "Come learn in my yeshiva. The burden of supporting you will be mine!"

With thanks and praise to Hashem, R' Ezra began learning at the yeshiva Ohel Moed, where he very soon joined the ranks of the shining stars of Torah.

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

The Case of the Missing Rabbi

And it would be that whoever would seek Hashem would go out to the Tent of Meeting (Shemos 33:7)

When Noda B'Yehudah was published, the sefer was shown to R' Baruch Teomim, author of Baruch Ta'am. It was on Ta'anis Esther, and wishing to peruse the sefer in peace and quiet, away from the bustle of his family preparing for Purim, R' Baruch took a candle and went up to the attic.

There he went through the sefer, unaware of the passage of time. Hour after hour went by, until it was time for the Megillah reading. Members of the

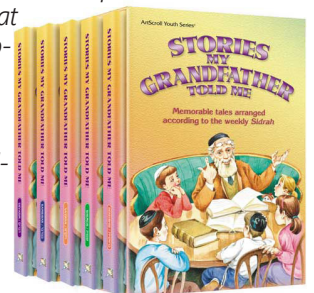
household searched for R' Baruch, but could not find him anywhere. The whole town was surprised and upset. With no choice, they went on and read the Megillah.

R' Baruch sat and learned until nearly morning. When he finished going through the sefer, he got up and went downstairs. Astonished to see how long his learning had lasted, he just barely managed to read the Megillah in time.

With the missing R' Baruch among them again, that Purim was an extra-joyous occasion.

And that very night, R' Baruch jotted down his remarks on Noda B'Yehudah, which were later published

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JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Rabbi Yaakov and Hadassah Weisel

Yad Eliezer is the largest Poverty Relief Agency in Israel. Yad Eliezer was founded in 1980 by Rabbi Yaakov and Hadassah Weisel, both elementary schoolteachers, and named in memory of her father, Rabbi Eliezer Lipa Benzman. It all began in the Weisel family kitchen in Yerushalayim. The seeds of the organization were planted when Hadassah, a resident of Jerusalem's Kiryat Sanz neighborhood, found out that her neighbor's family was suffering from malnutrition, and sent her daughters door to door to collect food for them every week. As

LEADER TIP:

Are there ways you can help around your neighborhood? Start small. The smallest of things can be the biggest of deals.

word got around, other families requested the same assistance, and she was soon sending all her daughters' classmates out to collect food, then filling colorful plastic shopping baskets for the weekly delivery. Other classes and other schools got involved, and Weisel's two-and-a-half room apartment became the collection point and packing area for monthly food boxes for 360 needy families – a figure that expanded to 1,800 needy families by 1995. After operating Yad Eliezer out of her apartment for 20 years, Weisel began soliciting overseas donations through the newly formed American Friends of Yad Eliezer to further expand the operation. Yad Eliezer is now headquartered in the Shmuel HaNavi neighborhood of Jerusalem under the directorship of the Weisels' son, Dov.



PUZZLERS ANSWERS

PARSHA CODE

1. When MOSHE COUNTED BNEI YISROEL, he COLLECTED a HALF a SHEKEL from each PERSON
2. The KI'OR was made from COPPER, and the KOHANIM WASHED their HANDS and FEET from it
3. The KETORES was a MIXTURE of SPICES that was BURNED on the MIZBAYACH every day
4. The BBUILDING of the MISHKAN stopped on SHABBOS
5. When BNEI YISROEL SAW that MOSHE did not COME DOWN from HAR SINAI, the made the EIGEK HAZAHAV (GOLDEN CALF)
6. The MEN THREW their JEWELRY into a FIRE, to make the EIGEL
7. When MOSHE came DOWN the MOUNTAIN, and SAW the EIGEK HAZAHAV, he THREW the LUCHOS down and BROKE them
8. MOSHE GROUND the EIGEK HAZAHAV into DUST, and gave the people from it to DRINK
9. MOSHE CALLS out "MI' L'HASHEM AYLAY", and SHEVET LEVI joined him
10. MOSHE was COMMANDED to CARVE 2 STONES just like the 1st LUCHOS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

1. One may not violate Shabbat to build the Mishkan.
2. The Bnei Yisroel counted the first day that Moshe went up and hence they were off in their counting.
3. Golden calf
4. He hoped to delay the construction so that Moshe can return in the interim.
5. He broke the Luchot.
6. No
7. Levi
8. He agreed to let His Shechinah dwell among them.
9. To pray for forgiveness.
10. He davened to Hashem not to destroy the Bnei Yisroel .
11. He came down on Yom Kippur (the 10th of Tishrei)
12. The second Luchot.
13. His face was shining.
14. Women have a custom not to work on Rosh Chodesh and they didn't die in the desert.
15. Whenever Hashem punishes the Jewish people, part of that punishment comes as payment for the golden calf .
16. Betzalel
17. The month of Adar
18. By collecting and counting the half shekel
19. To wash their hands and feet before doing the Avodah.
20. Oholiah

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

1. Aharon.
2. Calf.
3. The first two tablets.
4. Levi.
5. The second tablets.

PARSHA GAMES

This or That

by Sammy Schaechter

GOAL: To teach the kids about giving into peer pressure as well as “cleaning up the mess” before asking for forgiveness.

TYPE: Moderate, indoor, group game.

HOW TO PLAY: Have one of the group leaders give the kids a topic with 2 options (you can do 3 options if you have a lot of kids). For example: Vanilla or Chocolate, Coke or Pepsi, Swimming or hiking. Each option will be represented on one side of the room (if you'd like, it can help to print out pages and place them on the floor). Have each of the kids pick their answer and stand in that section of the room (or on the paper). Then have a representative from each side present why they think their option is the better option. Each team can then have one rebuttal. If anyone wants to switch at any time they are more than welcome. Use “would you rather” questions as well so that there is room for people to make decisions. Meaning, people know whether they like chocolate or vanilla better or if they like Coke or Pepsi better. But for questions such as “Would you rather go back in time and meet your ancestors or go way into the future and meet your great grandchildren?” we can get a lot more deciding, debating, and switching going on. Feel free to come up with your own questions, or even have kids come up with their own ideas (with

your guidance and making sure they're appropriate), or there are tons of sites online with great “Would you Rather” questions

DISCUSSION: When the Jewish people built the Golden Calf Moshe was on Har Sinai. Hashem notifies Moshe of the transgression of Bnei Yisrael and tells him to go down from the mountain to the people. He tells Moshe that He will destroy Bnei Yisrael. Moshe's immediate reaction is to start praying that Hashem should forgive them. וַיִּחַלֶּטְהָּ “And Moshe pleaded before Hashem...”. (Ex. 32,11) The great commentator on the Torah, Ibn Ezra, says that Moshe did not pray at this particular time. He first went down to the people, destroyed the Golden Calf, and punished the perpetrators of the crime and only then went up again to plead before Hashem on behalf of the Jewish people. What was Ibn Ezra's reason for this opinion? Rabbi Soloveitchik offers an answer to this question. Moshe could not pray for forgiveness while the Golden Calf still existed. How could Hashem forgive the people while they are in the midst of transgressing? He had to correct the situation and then ask for forgiveness. Hence Moshe went down from the mountain, destroyed the Golden Calf and punished the perpetrators of the crime. Only then did he ascend the mountain again and asked Hashem to forgive the Jewish people. If we hurt someone's feelings or mistreat a friend, we cannot expect to be forgiven until we correct the situation we created. Only then can we expect to be pardoned.

TEFILAH TREASURES

Shemona Esrei - Ve'Lirushalayim

In this bracha, we ask Hashem to rebuild and restore Yerushalayim as well as bring the Jewish people and His Shechinah back to dwelling in our land. Yerushalayim is Hashem's home and our home. It is the place where we hope to one day soon build the Third Beit HaMikdash and be able to give korbanot. How did the name Yerushalayim come about? What is its source? The Midrash (Bereishit Rabbah 56:10) tells us that the name Jerusalem is

a combination of two names. After Avraham offered Yitzchak as a korban to G-d, Avraham built a mizbeach and named the place “May G-d be Seen” (Yeira'eh), suggesting a place where Hashem's presence is felt and fear of Him exists. Malkizedek ruled over the city and called it Shalem, a place of peace and perfection. Hashem combined these two names, Yeira'eh and Shalem and called it Yerushalayim. This is the place where peace and per-

fection can be achieved by recognizing Hashem's presence. It is the place where righteousness can blossom to its fullest. This helps explain why this bracha begins with the word “and” which connects it to the previous bracha, Al HaTzadikim. The Gemara (Megillah 17b) teaches that the bracha for rebuilding Yerushalayim comes directly after Al HaTzadikim because Yerushalayim is where the tzaddikim will reach their full potential.

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